pasting on inland letters or envelopes during the last three years, year-wise and the amount spent thereon;

(b) whether there are any complaints about improper pasting of gum; and

(c) if so, what action has been taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GIRIDHAR GOMANGO): (a) The Department of Posts does not purchase any gum for pasting on Inland Letter Cards or the Envelopes. The Inland Letter Cards and the Envelopes are manufactured by the India Security Press at Nasik and Security Printing Press, Hyderabad which are under the administrative control of Ministry of Finance. The Department of Posts receives the Inland Letter Cards and the Envelopes with the gum affixed thereon. In view of the above, the Department of Posts has not incurred any expenditure for this purpose during the last three years.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Corrective action in this regard has been taken. The gum presently being used is of improved quality. Strict quality control has been imposed by India Security press Nasik for the procurement of good quality gum as well as its application during production.

Crashing of Defence Aircrafts

39. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of defence aircrafts which crashed during the last three months;

(b) whether Government have tried to find out the causes of increasing trend in accidents during the last three years; and

(c) if so, what action has been taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI K. C. PANT): (a) It would not be in the public interest to disclose this information.

(b) and (c) Each accident is thoroughly investigated by a Court of Inquiry. Besides, whenever a particular trend or a weak area is noticed special studies are conducted to carry out in depth analysis. Based on the recommendations made by the Courts of Inquiry, necessary follow up action wherever called for, is taken.

STD Service between Kalawa to Thane

40. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that people have to use STD services for contacting from Kalawa to Thane in the same Thane Municipal Corporation in Maharashtra;

(b) if so, whether it is against the Telegraphic Rules to have STD services in the same Municipal Corporation area; and

(c) if so, what steps Government are taking in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GIRIDHAR GOMANGO): (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Postpersons in the Country

41. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) what was the total number of postpersons in the country during the last three years; year-wise;

(b) whether Government are aware that there has been no substantial increase in number of postpersons with the increase in population